


# Holding Ground

the rebirth of dudley street

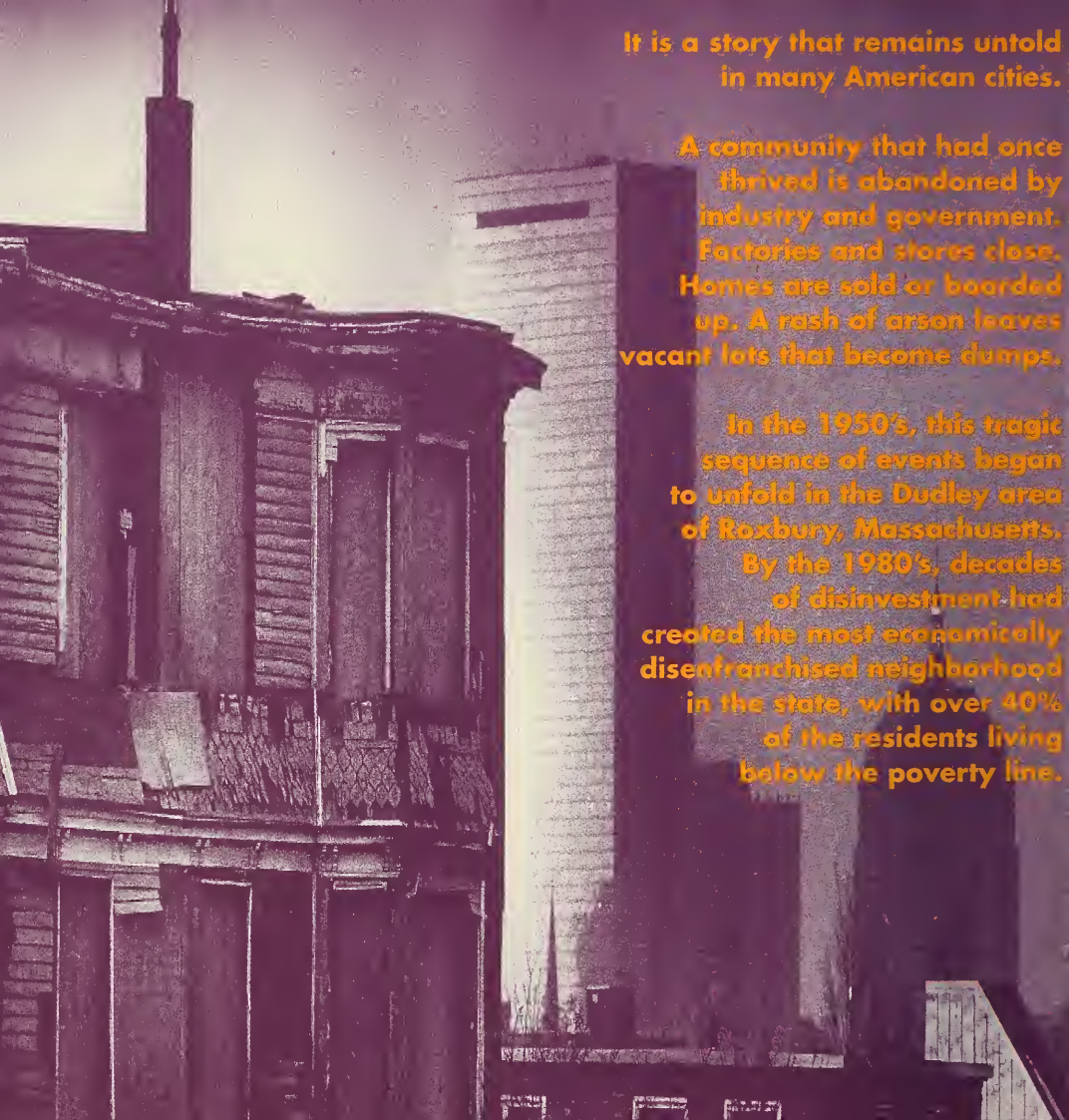
THE AWARD-WINNING DOCUMENTARY  
ABOUT COMMUNITY VISION,  
STRUGGLE AND CHANGE

Produced by  
Leah Mahan and Mark Lipman



*"Holding Ground" powerfully captures the high moments and the drudgery of rebuilding communities. The producers have brought a strong and creative touch to their work that will leave the audience with engaging portraits of activists and doers who refuse to give in and do prevail. We come away not only with good stories, but hope. Well done."*

Henry Hampton, Creator and Executive Producer,  
*Eyes on the Prize*

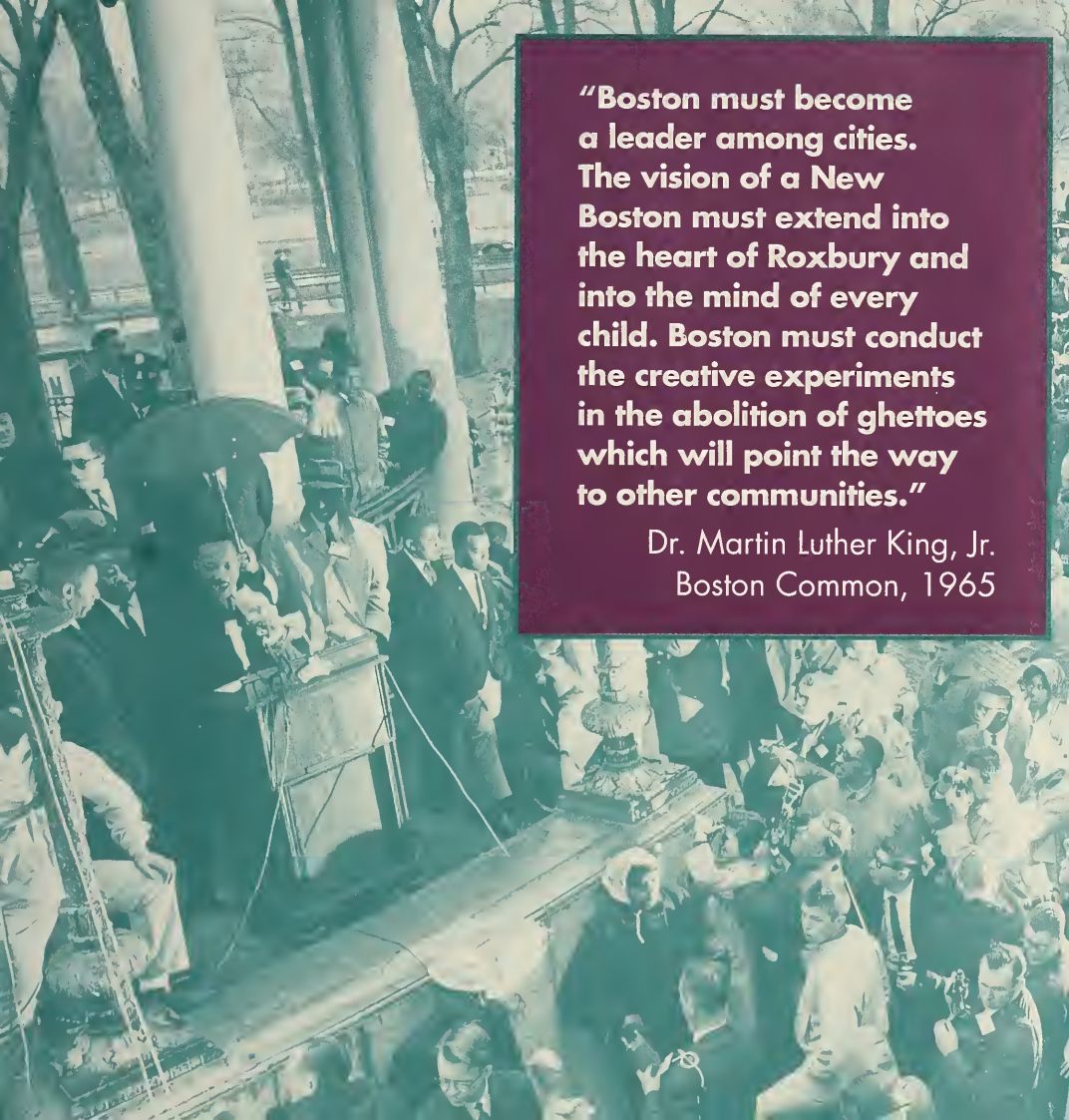


**It is a story that remains untold  
in many American cities.**

**A community that had once  
thrived is abandoned by  
industry and government.  
Factories and stores close.  
Homes are sold or boarded  
up. A rash of arson leaves  
vacant lots that become dumps.**

**In the 1950's, this tragic  
sequence of events began  
to unfold in the Dudley area  
of Roxbury, Massachusetts.**

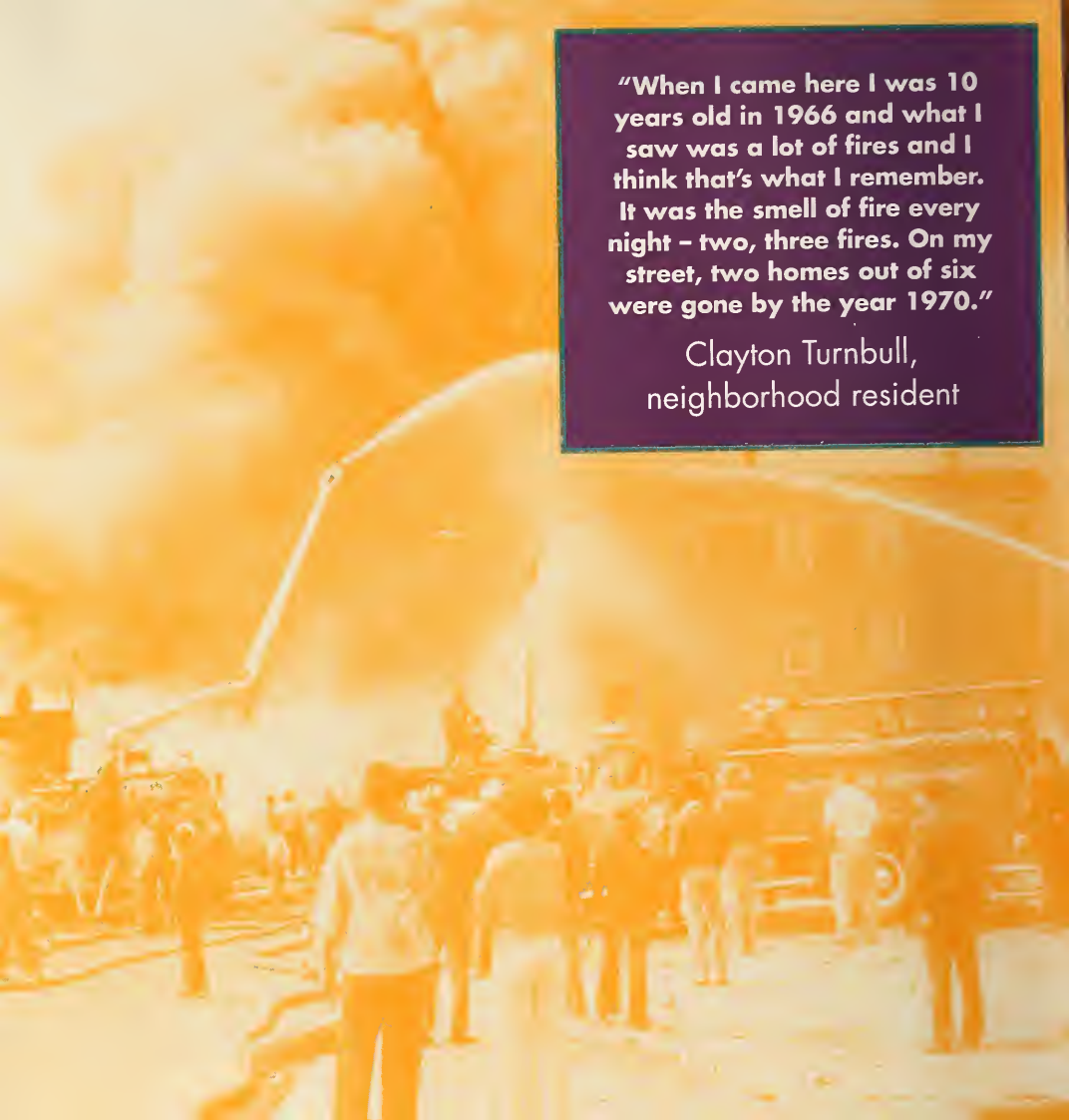
**By the 1980's, decades  
of disinvestment had  
created the most economically  
disenfranchised neighborhood  
in the state, with over 40%  
of the residents living  
below the poverty line.**



**"Boston must become  
a leader among cities.  
The vision of a New  
Boston must extend into  
the heart of Roxbury and  
into the mind of every  
child. Boston must conduct  
the creative experiments  
in the abolition of ghettos  
which will point the way  
to other communities."**

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Boston Common, 1965



A large fire is burning, with thick, billowing white smoke rising into the air. A fire hose is extended from the left, spraying a powerful stream of water onto the fire. In the foreground, a group of people, including children and adults, are standing and watching the scene. A fire truck is visible on the right side of the image. The overall scene is one of a major fire incident being fought by firefighters.

**"When I came here I was 10  
years old in 1966 and what I  
saw was a lot of fires and I  
think that's what I remember.  
It was the smell of fire every  
night - two, three fires. On my  
street, two homes out of six  
were gone by the year 1970."**

Clayton Turnbull,  
neighborhood resident

"There were unscrupulous contractors from throughout the Greater Boston area who would come and dump their garbage on these lots. You would go to sleep one night and the next morning you would find a car that was completely stripped, several refrigerators, a washing machine sitting in front of your house."

Nelson Merced,  
Director, La Alianza Hispana



**In 1985, African-American, Latino, Cape Verdean and European-American residents of the Dudley area united to revitalize their community.**

**The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative went on to gain national recognition as residents fought to close down illegal dumps, gain unprecedented control of land from City Hall and create a comprehensive plan to rebuild the fabric of their community . . .**

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***Holding Ground is at once a cautionary tale of urban policies gone wrong and a message of hope for all American cities.***

***Through the voices of committed residents, activists and city officials, this one-hour documentary shows how a Boston neighborhood was able to create and carry out its own agenda for change.***

**"Through grassroots sweat and tears, a group of ordinary people not only fight City Hall, but also persuade it to champion their stubbornly independent, neighborhood-driven approach to urban renewal . . . [Holding Ground] has cumulative human power and, at the end, an inspirational image of what the neighborhood was and what, with toil and pride, it is becoming."**

**John Koch, *The Boston Globe***

**"This terrific documentary – at once a moving history and a hopeful battle-cry – tells the story of a grassroots struggle to revitalize an urban neighborhood abandoned by America. The model of inter-ethnic solidarity and effective activism it presents will come like rain in a dry season to communities all over the nation."**

**Jonathan Kozol, author,  
*Death at an Early Age and Amazing Grace***

**"Beautifully shot, well researched, intimate and fresh, this film captures the vitality of an empowered community responding to the challenges of disinvestment, cultural differences, drugs and crime, and city politics. Its thematic chapters make wonderful catalysts for discussion."**

**Lillian Jimenez, Director of Media Literacy, Media Network**



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<http://www.archive.org/details/holdinggroundreb00newd>



**"A terrific story and a great organizing tool."**

Gordon Quinn, Kartemquin Films  
Executive Producer, *Hoop Dreams*

**"I was left with a profound sense of hope."**

Gloria Rubio-Cortes, Vice President  
National Civic League

**"Vividly portrays the ingredients of successful community revitalization: leadership, patience, participation, vision and organization."**

Harold Richman, Director,  
Chapin Hall Center for Children,  
University of Chicago

**"I would hope that anyone associated with . . . the rebirth of neighborhoods would have a chance to view the film."**

Mary Lou Crane, New England  
Director, U.S. Department of Housing  
and Urban Development

**"Powerful, moving and inspirational."**

Martha Matsuoka,  
The Urban Habitat Program,  
University of California, Berkeley

**"Community building is alive and well in America today. This superb documentary will make believers of those who doubt that, and provide heartening evidence to those who already know it."**

Lisbeth B. Schorr, Director  
Harvard University Project on  
Effective Interventions

CINE  
GOLDEN EAGLE AWARD

OUTSTANDING VIDEO  
New England  
Film and Video Festival

NOMINEE  
National Endowment for the Arts'  
National Medal of the Arts

GRAND PRIZE WINNER  
Carolina Film Festival

FINALIST  
WorldFest-Houston



*"It's not so much what building are you going to build or what social program are you going to change, but it's the people part of it, the part that has people investing themselves to make a difference, to make a change, and to see that hope. That's the challenge."*

Che Modyun, neighborhood resident



**Holding Ground** offers compelling viewing to people of all ages who are interested in the revitalization of America's cities. It will be of particular interest to:

Architects and urban planners  
Bankers  
Community development organizations  
Environmental organizations  
Foundations  
Government officials  
Human service providers  
Labor organizations  
Police & corrections officials  
Public health officials  
Religious organizations  
Youth organizations

It will be a welcome addition to high school, college, and university courses in:

Anthropology  
Architecture  
Community  
Organizing  
Criminal Justice  
Environment  
Film studies  
Government  
Multiculturalism  
Political Science  
Public Health  
Race Relations  
Social Change  
Social Policy  
Social Work  
Sociology  
Urban Planning  
Urban Studies

A **New Day Films** Release

A study guide is available

Major funding provided by The Ford Foundation,  
The Annie E. Casey Foundation and The Mabel Louise Riley Foundation.

Additional funding provided by the Falk Medical Fund, Hyams Foundation,  
Jacobs Family Foundation, Kapor Family Foundation, Lotus Development Foundation,  
Lyda Ebert Family Foundation, New England Film/Video Fellowships,  
Polaroid Foundation and private contributions. Fiscal sponsorship provided by Media Network  
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All proceeds will be used for the educational distribution of *Holding Ground*.



# Holding Ground

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U.S. POSTAGE  
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NEW YORK, NY  
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